



One Page Summary

FP Mission

To provide a place of worship for the International English-speaking community in Potsdam. We will create a gospel presence through expository teaching and discipleship, that influences international students and professionals.

FP Vision

Sow, Grow & Go

Executive Summary

We have planted an English-speaking church in Potsdam, Germany. The church is evangelistic in nature and discipleship-based. The strategic position of Potsdam as a key cultural center for students and professionals coming from both the East and West, gives this location strategic value for gospel advance.

Our Proposal

We are seeking like-minded partners to join us in this venture. We have currently raised 24,000€ in yearly commitments from local partnerships for the first three years and are seeking additional partnerships to cover our remaining yearly expenses in the amount of 12,000€ a year. Additionally, we estimate our startup expenses to be 20,500€ for the first year, of which we have raised 7,500€ of this amount. Please find below our strategy for moving into this next phase of our church plant.

Partnerships

- One Core Partnership at \$500 a month or \$6,000 a year.
- Five Executive Partnerships at \$100 a month or \$1,200 a year.
- Ten Associate Partnerships at \$50 a month or \$600 a year.

*Any extra funds raised will go towards currency exchange fees, inflation, and reserves for unexpected costs.

Special Match for Startup Expenses

We currently have a special match for our startup expenses of \$6,500. Any special gifts designated for Startup expenses from now until Easter will be matched to help us cover these expenses!



Phase 1- Sowing Meeting in a New Community

Background

In the Spring of 2020, God began working in the hearts of Franz and Kristie Martens to plant a church in their community. Residents of Potsdam, a city with much history located on the southwest side of Berlin, they saw a tremendous opportunity to plant an English-speaking church. Boasting three universities, it attracts students from all over the world to complete their post-graduate degrees in English. It also attracts many international professionals who come to work for the many computer companies in Berlin. Known for its atheistic beliefs, Potsdam is nevertheless a key city for the gospel to go into all the world.

With this in mind and much preparation and prayer, In February of 2022, a church was planted in the city out of CrossWay International Church in Berlin. The church planting team consists of members from CrossWay.

Potsdam has many traditional state churches who have departed from Orthodox Christianity and the city is littered with their historic church buildings. Additionally, over 90 percent of residents would define themselves as non-religious putting tremendous pressure on churches to survive in a culture that denies the existence of God. There are 3 evangelical gospel preaching churches in the area that focus exclusively on reaching German speaking residents. These churches have been praying for a gospel effort to focus on internationals and are partnering with us for this purpose. FP is the only church plant, in this city of 200,000 people, serving international English-speaking students, professionals, and families.

Ultimately, our desire is to equip a new generation to be effective ambassadors for Christ wherever they are planted. With students and professionals coming from India, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, we are in a strategic place to reach into unreached places. This gives urgency to our primary purpose of establishing a community that grows and matures believers who in turn are prepared to take the gospel wherever they may go. This means our vision must create a pathway to maturity. Discipleship is the word we use to describe this process of making mature disciples in Christ and the essential thread that binds together everything we have done and are yet to do.

Environment

Currently the church is meeting in a small house (300 ft²) in the south-east corner of the city. We have seen a steady group gather over the past year to sing, hear God's Word, and pray. Our church is made up primarily of international students representing many nations and a few local professionals who have made Potsdam their home. We also have 4 families from Berlin who attend with the intention of growing the church. In November of 2022 we chose to take a step of naming our church plant "Fellowship Potsdam".

We have found opportunities to engage students through student led meetings, gatherings in homes and engagement with CrossWay Church for fellowship events. This has seen us solidify a core group, but new growth has been limited in the final quarter of 2022.



Phase 2- Growing Creating a Greater Presence and Engagement

Our mission centers around reaching students and professionals with the gospel close to centers of influence (Universities/Business Centers). With this in mind, we see the next step in the future of our church as acquiring a better location that will allow us to engage those we are trying to reach. Below we have identified some challenges to growth and our strategy for mitigating these obstacles.

Current Challenges to Growth

Location

The main campus of the largest university is located in Golm, in the north-west part of the city, one hour away by public transportation from our current location. Additionally, our location is only available for use on Sunday mornings for a few hours.

Space

Students are typically crammed into shared living spaces with little to no privacy to share their faith or to have faith-based conversations with their friends. Providing a location to meet this need would allow us to sow seeds of faith by establishing a consistent presence in proximity to the students and professionals we are trying to reach.

Transportation

Being close to a transportation hub is important because currently it takes an hour by bus on Sunday morning to attend services for most students. This bus only comes once an hour and missing it ruins the morning.

Giving

The transient nature of the city and the low-income of those we are working with create instability in establishing consistent funding to cover our costs as we move into this next phase. We are seeking to mitigate this by creating a diverse support team of partners both here and abroad that will give us the best chance of creating a long-term presence in this city.

Strategy for Growth

We plan to meet the challenges to growth of our current location, space and transportation needs by finding a dedicated space in proximity to those we are trying to reach. We envision a space of about 1500 ft² located closer to the main campus and closer to a public transportation hub. This space would be used up to 6 days a week as a staffed study/co-work location, a discipleship/leadership training center, and for a Sunday morning worship venue.

In regard to the challenges we face concerning our current capabilities to fund a dedicated space, we have developed a plan to meet the need of our increased ongoing expenses. We are projecting that two-thirds of the funding needed for the first three years will come from our partnership with CrossWay Church and our own congregation. We will also pursue strategic partnerships with other like-minded churches and individuals for the final third of this funding.

We see the next three years as critical to our church planting effort and to establishing a well-rooted community. While we desire to become a self-supporting church plant we see the need for additional partners due to the difficult nature of church planting in East Germany, where time and again churches launched without proper funding tend to be unstable and fail quickly.

Funding Proposal

Below we have projected our expenses for the next phase of our church plant. This proposal seeks to show potential partners how we plan to position ourselves for growth.

We have estimated our operating costs for the first three years at 36,000€ (\$39,000) a year. 24,000€ of the total has been committed by the church in Germany. We desire to develop new partners to cover the remaining yearly expenses of 12,000€ a year. In addition, 7,500€ plus a 6,500€ match has been committed for startup costs. Meeting this match will cover our startup costs. Please find the cost breakdown below.

Yearly Expenses	
Facility:	24,000€
Utilities:	6,000€
Miscellaneous	2,000€
Insurance	1,000€
Emergency/Savings	3,000€
Personnel Costs	Currently Covered
Yearly Accrued Expenses	36,000€
Current Funding Committed (German Partners)	24,000€
Yearly Funding Commitment Still Needed	12,000€
Startup Costs	
Deposit (returned at end of rental term)	Currently Covered
Video Equipment	2,150€
Sound Equipment	2,000€
Chairs	6,000€
Writing Tables	500€
Folding Tables	1,000€
Standing Tables	200€
Coffee Machines	1,000€
Printer	150€
Lighting	500€
Marketing	1,000€
Web Design	Currently Covered
Total Startup Expenses	20,500€
Startup Expenses raised	7,500€
	6,500€ (matching)
Startup Expenses Still Needed	6,500€

Please feel free to contact Franz Martens (franz@franzmartens.com) or Chad Gfeller (chad.gfeller@berlinministries.org) and we would love to share with you more about our vision for reaching the next generation for God's glory in the city of Potsdam.



Q and A with Franz Martens, lead pastor of Fellowship Potsdam International Church.

How is the church plant in Potsdam going?

The church plant in Potsdam is off to a great start. We began holding services in February and since then the Lord has established a core group of attenders. The new name for this church plant is “Fellowship Potsdam” (FP) which describes our desire to be in fellowship with one another and with Christ.

Why did you decide to plant this church in Potsdam?

The primary purpose of planting this church in Potsdam is to provide a place for international believers to worship in English without having to travel to Berlin. The location of Potsdam is important because of the proximity of three universities which attract international students from all over the world.

What are your future plans for this church?

The primary purpose of planting any church is to develop a community that grows and matures believers who in turn are prepared to take the gospel to the world they live in. This means our plans need to point specifically in that direction. Discipleship is the word we use to describe this process.

At FP, we have identified a process of discipleship that moves people in a practical, but simple direction. “Sow-Grow-Go” is our simple way of summing it up and here is how we describe it.

Sow - This is the entry point into our church. Here is where the seed is sown and how we get to know one another. Unlike typical church plants in the United States, Potsdam has very few believers. The majority of students we encounter don’t believe God exists. So, our sowing is very gospel saturated with many unbelievers attending our services hopefully to place their faith in Christ. Once they do, we begin the process of discipleship.

Grow - After a seed is sown, it’s time to create conditions in which it can grow. New believers learn to follow Jesus by serving in environments such as the morning worship service or attending a discipleship group. This starts moving people towards spiritual growth.

Go - When a seed is grown towards maturity, it is ready to produce the fruit that it was created for. A mature believer is ready to go into the environment that God has prepared for them and take what they have learned through their growth to create opportunities to take other people through the process of “Sow, Grow, Go.”